WHAT GOOD DOES WISHING DO?

BY

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"*O Lord, whose heart is deeper than my heart,*
Draw mine to Thine to worship where Thou art:
For Thine own glory join the twain,
Never to part again,
Nor to have lived nor to have died in vain."

CHRISTINA ROSSETTI.

WHAT GOOD DOES WISHING DO?

It would seem hard at first thought to find a connecting link of interest between four such diverse works as Chambers' *Book of Days*, Hawthorne's *Mosses from an Old Manse*, Marshall's *Economics*, and Andrew Murray's *With Christ in the School of Prayer*. Yet each of these books has a word to say in regard to wishing; each answers, in its own way, the question, What Good Does Wishing Do?

In the *Book of Days* there is related the legend of the Wishing-Wells of Walsingham. In the old days there were, in Norfolk, England, two wells, between which lay a stone. Upon that stone, said tradition, one must kneel with his right knee bare. He must plunge one hand in each well, so that the water reaches the wrist, and while doing so, may wish for anything he desires. After this, he must drink as much of the water of the wells as may be held in the hollow of his hands. If he never tells his wish to any other, — never utters it aloud, even to himself, — within a year his wish will come true!

In "The Intelligence Office," a story in *Mosses from an Old Manse*, there is a wonderful Book of Wishes, in which are recorded the longings of the heart of man. This book is kept by a figure "who looked like the spirit of a record, the soul of his own great volume, made visible in mortal shape." Into the office filed day by day, the long processional of the Unsatisfied, — of men and women who wished for health, beauty, wealth, truth, power, youth, fame, or even death. One wish was the most curious of all. It came from a man who said: "I want my place — my own place, my true place in the world, my proper sphere, my thing to do which nature intended me to perform when she fashioned me thus awry, and which I have vainly sought all my life-time."

In the *Economics* there is a scientific "study of the variety of human Wants, considered in their relation to human Efforts and Activities."

The *School of Prayer* presents the desires of man as realized by faith, and fulfilled through earnest and prevailing prayer.

On this ascending ladder, thought may step across many centuries, and look out on many dreams. The first idea is that of early superstition, revealed in folk-lore and legends. It is the idea of the answer to wishes through magic, through spells, through a mysterious and blind fate, to which man may appeal by occult rites. Even yet we hear of pulling wish-bones, and of looking up

at the new moon over our left shoulder, in order to gain our heart's desire!

The second phase is psychologic. It is the insight of the seer into the forces which are determining life, — the presentation of the inner arena of the soul, where various longings are contending for recognition and realization, — where the real history of man is being born. Says Hawthorne, "Human character in its individual development, human nature in the mass, may best be studied in its wishes; and this was the record of them all."

The third is technical and practical. It is a plain, direct examination of the relation of desire to activity, to economic progress.

The fourth is spiritual. It is an outlook upon the possibilities of life, and the final destiny of man. Taken as a whole, they present four phases of the endless quest of the soul for growth, happiness, power, content.

Certain points may be noted in them all. First, the universality of Desire. We all want something. Second, the intensity of Desire, — its psychic force. It underlies all effort and activity. If nobody wanted anything, what would anybody have? Not only would all ideals and ennobling efforts be cut off, but existence itself would be sapped at the roots. Action would cease. Naked, cold, wet, starved, unloved, untaught, unfed, unsheltered, the race would perish from the earth. Civi-

lization means the multiplication of desires, — their new scope and co-ordination. The study of social evolution is chiefly the study of Desire.

The day of wishing is the day of fate. "The lesson of life," says Emerson, "is practically to generalize; to believe what the years and centuries say against the hours; to resist the usurpation of particulars, to penetrate to their catholic sense." The hours say, We are frustrated in many a hope, disappointed in many a dream. But the centuries say, Man has in all times moved forward by virtue of his heart's desire. What I am to-day, I yesterday longed to be. I stand to-day on my past desires.

If this be true, our Wishing-Well is not at Walsingham. It is the universe itself: eternity is at our beck. To be reckless in desire, is to be reckless of social progress. To be heedless in our wishing, is to be heedless of the destiny of man.

The Desire-problem is an intellectual problem of the day. Bound up with it are many current phases of scientific inquiry in psychology, biology, sociology, and economics. The time has come when Desire must also be thoughtfully considered in relation to religion. What has it to do with the spiritual aspect of our lives? What is its place between man and God? In a large sense, What Good Does Wishing Do?

At once one asks, Must we get rid of Desire, in

order to lead a religious life? Must our human longings be cast out?

To the questions of the soul, each age gives its own answer. In mediæval times, the answer to this question was: Crucify Desire! If you have a human affection, crush it; if you have an intellectual ambition, put it down; if you have a social hope, bury it. Resignation, submission, retirement from men, were the watchwords of the technically religious life. Says Thomas à Kempis in praise of the Holy Fathers, "They renounced all riches, dignities, honors, friends, and kinsfolk; they desired to have nothing which appertained to the world; they scarce took the necessaries of life; they grudged even the necessary care of the body." There is even yet a form of quietism running through our teaching and our prayers. We are not to have what we want — we are to take in patience what we get.

But to-day we are reaching out toward something quite different from the old outlook on Desire. Is there no way of dealing with Desire, which shall be more consistent with the free and happy course of nature, with the unfolding of the promise of the world? We seek a religion that shall bring a large activity into the spiritual life, that shall appeal to us as a fulness of being, not as a fragment of being set apart for a heavenly use. If we deliberately shut family affection from our lives, if we turn our back on business, society, and

living contact with the world, if we go about in heaviness of heart, — what vitality, what eagerness, what zest, have we left with which to serve God?

Gradually there is dawning upon the mind the real significance of religion, — its scope, its aim. It is not a state of restriction, of giving up, but one of freedom, and of continuous gain. It is not a state of mere contemplation, resignation, tears, but of eager work and of whole-souled delight. Its final attribute is joy.

True religion does not require us to give up our intellect, our hospitality, any more than our ears. It lets us keep our impulse of wishing — our power of Desire. It simply asks their devotion to the highest use. Consecration includes the whole of ourselves, — nothing wanting, nothing left out, nothing cast behind. Desire is the most intense working-power we have. The question today, then, takes a new form. It is: What can we do with our wishes to make them the ministers of righteousness? What can we do with Desire to make it the executive of the Eternal? The conduct of life resolves itself into the right conduct of Desire.

Our world is a world of law. For the right conduct of Desire there must be a spiritual law, — a law calm, immutable, eternal, without obedience to which our lives are but useless, our endeavors misdirected, our hopes set on nothingness, and our deeds upon a dream. What is the Law of Right

Desire? Is it not this: *Let wishing be one with the will of God.*

There are two phases of the will of God. One is His whole plan for the progress of the race. With this aspect of His will — the ruling of creation — we have no concern. We, the finite, cannot enter into the thought of the Infinite. The other phase is the will of God for the individual creature, — for you, for me. This is His will for each soul, His guardianship over its possibilities, His setting of one's life in its best place in relation to the progress of the world. This will, Dr. Murray believes, we may know by faith and prayer.

Such a belief, considered in the light of the analogies of life, is most reasonable. What does a child know of the plans of its parents? of their activities in the world? of their intellectual, social, and financial responsibilities? of their daily problems? Nothing. But day by day even a baby learns the will of its parents for its little life.

Earth is the childhood of the soul. Our day of pilgrimage is our day of obedience. Hereafter, it may be, we may exercise a wider intelligence, exert a more unguided will. But here we are under watchfulness and loving control. To wish wholly with the will of God would be to rid our lives of weakness, weariness, irresolution, caprice, and sin. To wish with the will of God in any measure, is to that degree to place our lives in harmony with universal progress and with godlike events. "O

Universe," cries Marcus Aurelius, "I wish what thou wishest!" What is that but our saying, Thy will be done?

Opposition to the will of God is a gigantic waste of life, — the most uneconomic act. It is as though one should say, The earth may turn about on its axis, but I shall not turn with it. The earth may revolve about the sun, but I shall stay where I am!

The will of God, however, should not be accepted grudgingly. It is not meant to be a thing we should fret about, or complain about, or take because we have to. Let us rather rise to the larger outlook, delight in it, accept it with joy, as the true principle of spiritual independence, happiness, and power.

From the moment that this decision is made, the real spiritual life of the soul begins. This is all that is meant by conversion. It is all that is meant by the religious life. It is all that underlies any spiritual problem. When wishing is one with the will of God, life is set toward is highest: mind, heart, and soul are at their very best.

After the Law of Right Wishing, comes the Law of Fulfilment. It is: *That thing, right in itself, which we temperamentally most wish for, is the thing we are spiritually chosen to attain.* Says Fourier, "The attractions of man are proportioned to his destinies."

Let us now consider more in detail this new re-

lation of Desire. Let us note how it affects certain phases of our lives. I have chosen certain fundamental desires of the heart for illustration, but the principle which lies behind them may be applied to our every wish.

1. The Wish for Wealth. Says Hawthorne of the Book of Wishes: "The most ordinary wish that was written down, with wearisome recurrence, was, of course, for wealth, wealth, wealth, in sums from a few shillings up to unreckonable thousands."

The wish for wealth is the economic lever of the world. To make no use of it, would be as foolish as to attempt to raise the Sphinx without applying the physical lever of Archimedes. Trade, manual industry, commerce, and business relations are largely built upon the wish for wealth. Man is by nature acquisitive. From infancy he begins to amass toys, games, books, lands, houses, granaries, and factories. He is born for produce, exchange, and the laying up of stores.

Simple increase is not a sin; there is a religious aspect of plutology. Abraham was a man of wealth. Job was "the greatest of all the children of the East." To Manasseh were added "riches and honor." Economic intelligence is not a sin. The wish to improve one's financial opportunities honorably is not a sin. Crusoe was cast upon an island, poor, wet, hungry, homeless, and beaten by the sea. He became a man of establishment, of retinue, of

possession, and that blamelessly. What wrong was there in his bringing up goats and fowl, in his laying up grain, and building himself a better house than the first hut he reared above his head as shelter from the sun and storm? The general economic wish for wealth, which discovers continents, plants colonies, holds sea and desert in freehold, utilizes natural forces, and fills a country with thrift, intelligence, and honest work, is not a sin. If it were, the economic progress of the world must be left to infidels!

Religion, instead of interfering with this natural desire of man, inevitably increases his wealth-producing power, — makes him economically more efficient. It makes him more keenly conscious of the value of time, more sober, more industrious, more painstaking in his work, more skilled in his task. It fires him with courage and content, gives a great aim to his energies, fills him with joy and inspiration.

Religion does one thing more. Says Paracelsus: —

> "Be sure that God
> Ne'er dooms to waste the strength He deigns impart."

It makes the acquisition of wealth, not a form of personal greed, but of spiritual energy, which works with the forces of nature, which abides by the laws of produce and exchange, but which has, under all, a spiritual end in view, — that of human helpfulness by means of wealth.

By wealth, I do not mean alone the rightly-earned great fortunes of the world; I mean what men lay up, or may lay up. In the power of making an income, and of saving something, however small an amount, beyond the daily need, there is a power of independence, of charity, of spiritual freedom and delight. Each dollar of added resource is a call to a fuller and deeper religious life. It does not seem as if this were so. It is harder for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God than for a camel to pass through the needle's eye. But when the rich man does enter in, he has a noble work to do. It was David who planned the Temple; it was Solomon, the richest king of history, who carried out his dream. It is you or I who has the power to make each increase, small or great, an act of religion. We may be housed and fed in a spiritual manner, entering into the beauty of the world, not necessarily rejecting form, grace, color, harmony, or loveliness in our surroundings, but wearing upon each and all the impress of allegiance, of devotion. Wealth may be ours, to retain and use, by the will of God; to lay down, as Gallitzen did his titles and estates, for labor in the mountain wilds; to pass on to others, as those do who in their lifetime build up the works of mercy and of peace. Then shall the wish for wealth become a heavenly instinct, and wealth-earning one of the upbuilding forces in the kingdom of the Lord!

For how much wealth, do you say, shall we ask? For just enough to do the work we are sent to do, in the best way, with the environment which, for our highest efficiency, we should have. This money-wish will be granted.

It is pitiful the way we distrust God. It is miserable, the needless unrest and anxiety we have. There ought not to be such heavy money-burdens in the world. We speak and act as if there were not power enough in heaven to provide for our daily wants, as if we might some day freeze or starve. But the will of God carries plenty for God's children — is adequate for our every need.

2. The Wish for Love. The wish for love is not simple, it is composite. Sociologically considered, it is a wish for the highest form of reaction — that of mutual affection — between ourselves and those with whom we come in contact. It underlies all forms of personal regard and of social attraction. It includes the wish for admiration, for esteem, for companionship, for friends, for husband or wife, for children, for the social stability of a home. Under all there is a subtle yearning after God.

"Those that want friends to open themselves unto," says Bacon, "are cannibals of their own hearts." The world is full of the hungry-hearted. They look out upon life through eyes in which there is a mist of sadness and of tears. What does religion say to such as these?

The scientific value of religion is that it puts us in such relation to the world that the longed-for reaction may take place; the heart may attain its ideal attitude. Asceticism is wholly unscientific. Religion does not take away the wish for love. It does not excommunicate affection. It does not call to an ascetic life. By the ascetic life I do not mean simply not marrying, I mean the putting by of the caresses of life, of the impulsive affection, of the out-going tenderness of the heart, in order to steel ourselves against idolatry of the creature. As if over-love were possible!

Said a friend to me once, "Whenever I find myself caring very much for anything or any one, I immediately give it up, to see whether I can. I am afraid that if I do not keep in practice this way, some day I may be asked to give up something that I could not possibly give up. I want to train myself to renunciation."

God trains us to renunciation — we do not train ourselves. Could there be a more sad and mistaken idea of the will of God toward those we love, toward those whose love we wish to gain? God is not a Withholder — He is a Giver. God is not a Breaker of hearts. We often speak as if He were.

The first response of religion to our wish for love is the presentation of a God who *is* Love, — Love omnipotent in heaven, and of the Christ,

"Strong Son of God, Immortal Love,"

who is Love incarnate on the earth. Love infinite, eternal, redemptive, is for the heart of man.

Manward, the call of religion is a call to the fellowship of the race, to friendship, to spiritual communion, to the deepest and tenderest human ties that the world has ever known. It gives a new impetus to every social instinct; it strengthens every right sort of affinity; it advances every form of right attractiveness, magnetism, charm. Religion sets the love of the heart — its human longings — in deeper channels; it does not cut them off. It makes them purer, tenderer, more constant and uplifting. A stirring presentation of this fact is in *Quo Vadis*, in the love of Vinicius and Lygia. A pagan desire in the heart of the proud Roman is transformed, in obedience to the developing consecration of the Christian faith, into the most exalted human affection, the purest and sweetest of domestic ties.

Our wish for affinity, for social cohesion, for loving allegiance, has a spiritual significance. Every impulse of right love in the heart, every wish that looks toward its fulfilment, is a moving of the soul toward the great life of God, which is Love itself. Love is the vital principle of living; it is the great differentiator in the universal scheme. Those who love are in the social ascendant. Every impulse of charity is progressive. Every loving deed is tributary to the happy future of the race.

To choke love, to repress it, is to be in the path of annihilation, of oblivion, of social death.

The social fabric is built firmly upon the home. Those who think that the wish for home ties is passing away, look upon but a shallow aspect of our times. Never was there a more deeply rooted love of social order, of domesticity, than now. Here and there, there already rises a home, a marriage, which seems the height of earthly felicity, and the emblem of eternal joy.

This is as it was meant to be. The life of man was planned, not for social anarchy, but for growing happiness and content. Marriage is for companionship, for discipline, for social culture, for a religious heredity, for a chain of generations praising God and serving Him, until the years of time shall be no more. True courtship is an act of devotion. Right marriage is a sacramental relation. Says Emerson, "Love prays. It makes covenants with Eternal Power in behalf of this dear mate." Religion provides for united affection, for conjugal regard. It is sweet to look into the eyes of husband or wife and see there the fulfilment of one's early dreams of love; of gentleness, strength, courage, chivalry; of beauty, tenderness, grace. But sweeter yet is the thought, And we are also spiritual comrades: together we may walk with God.

In proportion as the great ideal of spiritual companionship enters into our earthly friendships

and relations, in proportion will the world socially advance. Love is a high form of social control. We stamp the individuality of our affection upon the race, as well as that of our presence or command. The world is sweeping out into the great times of human love — the golden age of tenderness draws nigh. After centuries of starved and broken hearts, after generations of misunderstanding and unrest, there is being uplifted the ideal standard of Christian love. Let the wish for love, then, be a grave and holy wish, set in its universal relation, judged by an infinite decree. Then shall the society of humanity be one in gentleness and truth; then shall there be loyalty, honor, and high allegiance between great souls; then shall "reign the world's great bridals, chaste and calm," then shall spring "the crowning race of human kind."

3. The Wish for Wisdom. To know is one of the great yearnings of the race. It leads noble spirits ever toward the truth. One of the most impressive places in the world is a great library, — the Bodleian, the library of the British Museum, the *Bibliothèque Nationale*. The Bodleian is altogether the quietest and most persuasive library for research of which I know. The scent of ages is in the air. In the pale light that falls through the lancet windows, one sees solemn rows of brown-backed folios. There is a strange silence, an atmosphere of pathetic sadness in the old room. It seems haunted by the shades of earnest men,

who, giving their lives to learning, have toiled, fasted, read, prayed, and wrought, leaving to us, — in volumes illumined in blue and scarlet and gold, — long after the dust has gathered on their forgotten graves, these legacies of their tears and dreams. From the ends of the earth, the Bodleian has called the questing souls of the ages into its dim recesses, its aisles of peace. In its hush and shadow, the voices of the outer world are but as the clamor and wrangling of children at their play. St. Mary's bell rings across the silver silence, the immemorial vine waves in the wind, one hears the rustle of Heber's tree, and the gentle fall of rain. The real life — the life eternal — seems set within this tower of dreams.

No less impressive is it to turn to the laboratories of science, and to the places of applied science, — the industrial centres of the world. The longing to know is exemplified not only in universities and libraries, but wherever the intellectual power of man has been put forth in search of new ways of rule over nature, — in steel-works, shipyards, watch-factories, print-mills, saw-mills, engine-houses, smelting-works, and mining-camps.

What has religion to do, not only with the wish for attainments in philosophy, in history, in literature, but with the industries of the world? — with the longing for knowledge which may be put directly to an economic use? If the far-reaching relations between learning and religion were better

understood, there would be a new gentleness, a new spiritual approachability, in both the university teacher or student, and in the workingman.

All knowledge converges: the paths of intellectual inquiry lead straight to God. What is it that, after all our seeking, we really learn to know? Is it not something necessarily relating to the works, the ways, or the will of God?

Religion lays no bar upon intellectual eagerness, upon mental alertness. It does not choke the capacity to think; it has need of all our brains. Says Ruskin of the painter and the preacher, "Both are commentators on infinity." Such a commentator each thinking man or woman is meant to be.

Wisdom is the correlation of cause and effect, ever looking toward the best conduct of life. Faith is economic; it prevents intellectual waste. Each spiritual experience clears and fortifies the brain. Each prayer paves the way to keener insight. There is no combat — how could there be? — between true science and true religion. To be irreligious, is to be largely stupid. It is to stand blindfolded before the sun. It is to be crass to divine portents, teachings, and events.

Wisdom is also the realization that each action is intrenched in the history of ages gone, and reaches out in influence to ages yet to come, — the consciousness that in order to move the world onward, one's every act must accord with universal law. A still voice says to Paracelsus, —

> "Know, not for knowing's sake,
> But to become a star to men forever."

Wisdom is the laying down of the self-love, — the resolution of one's individual life into a larger whole. The wise man says, I am, not that I may be soothed, may be admired, may be happy; I am, that upon my life the race may rise. I do, not that shouts of applause may follow the deed; I do, that the soul of man may progress. I feel, that I may some day bless.

The life of the Lord Christ means the passing of incarnate wisdom before the eyes of the world. Here was a Man who knew the meaning of life, the mystery of loss, and what is to befall after death. He knew the real value of poverty, loneliness, pain; He could weigh things temporal and things eternal, and pronounce upon them all. What did He say to be the supreme intellectual height of His royal life — the end and aim of His desire? "For I am come down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of Him that sent me." This is wisdom — final truth — for the ever-questing soul of man.

4. The Wish for Power. The wish for power is a wish for world-effect, — a wish to impress ourselves as largely as possible upon the race. Man is never exultant until he has achieved some form of power. The wish for power is instinctive. To repress it would be to retard human progress. The life of the normal man is a daily

increase in power, — an ascent in might. In the nursery a child's power is over toys; in the kindergarten it is over balls and color-strands, rhythm, movement, song; in school he holds rule over an arithmetic, a geography, a spelling-book, with a certain standing among his mates; in the workshop a man gains power over tools; in business over trade; in college over the information, ideals, and aspirations of the race; in society he gains power over men, over duties, responsibilities, position, trust. If a man did not rise in power, his life would be a perpetual babyhood.

When should this rise stop? What limits are there to ourselves? We are born for power, — for the power of our personality, the power of our specific talent, the power of our sympathy, the power of our enthusiasm and of our ideals. Religion does not still the wish for power, nor check its natural growth. The Scriptures reverberate with promises of power. Instead of taking away our desire for power, religion places us in the way of endless, constant, and ever-increasing power.

Ambition is not necessarily a form of greed; religion makes of it a form of spiritual energy. There is an ambition which is in keeping with both piety and evolution. It is not the ambition of the proud or self-seeking. It is the noble aspiration of those who wish to do their best for God; who do not wish to be putterers or palterers; who have a horror of being incompetent; who wish God

to be glorified by their efficiency, as well as by their prayers. Whitefield's seal, a winged heart soaring above the earth, displays the motto, *Astra petamus.* We need not draw back from promotion; we need not minimize our possibilities of control.

Power is an impulse of the Eternal. It is the abiding of the wonder-working Spirit in the heart. Power, in the spiritual analysis of life, is the will of God working through the consecrated faculties of man. The energy of the Spirit becomes one with one's own endeavor.

What is history, the history of the past nineteen centuries, but the history of the increasing dominion of religious men, — a history that is today reaching forth to Asia and the islands of the sea, laying a hand of control upon the tropics, and bringing darkened peoples under the rule of faith. The most gigantic fact of history is the power wielded, not by despots, but by men and women of spiritual ideals. In inspiration there is necromancy, there is fate.

Sway! Each of us aspires to some form of human sway. But each advance in power, each victory of control, has a special significance: it marks our new capacity for human service. Power exists for the world's need.

What is the great world-need? It is the need of the right use of our power over souls. The supreme privilege given to man on earth is the power to lead another soul to Christ. It is the

greatest joy. Love, friendship, motherhood, — these are sweet. But sweeter yet is to hear the softly-spoken words, — the sweetest one shall ever hear, — You led me to the Christ! That phase of power is infinite, and thrills to holy tears.

Power is proportionate to prayer. In the life of faith and prayer there lies hid the secret of the largest possible control. Says Murray, "At creation . . . the destinies of the world were given into the power of the wishes, the will, the prayer, of man." There is no legitimate form of power to which the man of God may not aspire, nor which, having attained, he may not grandly use. In our own character, in our own influence, we may each dispense to the race the sacrament of the sublime.

Let each soul say, I go from power to power! My advance is eternal. I never expect to be less powerful than I am to-day. I hope to be much more so. But my power is not final; it is held in fief. My sway is all for God. Wherever my influence goes, let the name of Jesus also go; wherever I am known, let the Cross be known; wherever my voice is heard, let redemption be proclaimed; and at my death, let this be the one fact notable, It is the passing of a servant of the Most High. Then shall all power be for the glory of God, and all dominion for the help of man!

5. The Wish for Holiness. Under all the sin, folly, and discouragement of life, there is a longing for an ideal way of living, — for purity,

nobility, spiritual grace. Wistfulness is characteristic of the race. Wistful faces look out upon us from history, — St. Columba on Iona, St. Hilda from her abbey, St. Chrysostom, St. Augustine. Must desire die with the day? Do their unvoiced hopes fade in forgetfulness? and is there no memory of their longing for evermore? Not so. Silence infolds them, shadow is upon their eyes, but something yet remains of their hopes, their far-off outlook, their silent dreams.

Yet after all our longing, when we try to tell what we mean by holiness, it is hard to say. Holiness is surely not a state of special scourging of the flesh: holiness must be something which each one may achieve. St. Simeon Stylites may stand for thirty years upon his tower; he may wear the twisted rope about his loins; he may have his leg chained to a crag; he may live on his pillar of three cubits, of twelve cubits, of forty cubits from the ground, with the sun upon his head, and the hoar-rime upon his brow, — but this life is not necessarily a life of holiness. Holiness thrives best in the open world, where danger and temptation, trial and human sorrow, deepen and quicken the nobler powers of the soul.

Holiness is not a sanctimonious way of living and of talking. The over-pious are moral eccentrics. A prig is a spiritual degenerate, — one who lives by form, instead of by spirit. What exact regulations can be set for the soul whose aims are

infinite, whose years are eternal? No one excites a more healthy animosity than a thoroughgoing prig. Our hatred of a prig is a hatred of a sham, a misconception, a half-truth. The glory of the ways of Jesus is that they embody, not a formal religious etiquette, but a spirit: every word was touched with kindness, and held a heavenly revelation for the conduct of the life of man.

Neither is holiness a state of perfection upon earth. Everything in nature proclaims itself but an imperfect type of a coming perfection, — of a beauty that is yet to be. The most discouraging thing that could be said to the soul would be, Ye shall be perfect in this life! Our souls are larger than this life, — our powers, our needs. Perfection, of a truth, lies beyond the grave, unstirred by this world's sun or storm, ungrieved by this world's sorrow or despair.

Holiness does not grow out of moral axioms, of ethical precepts, of philanthropies, of gentle manners. These have no deepness of earth; and when the sun is risen, they are scorched, and because they have no root they wither away. Holiness is a life which rests on faith in Jesus Christ. To long for holiness is to long to be like Christ. The law of growth is, We grow toward our desire. But like Christ we can never be, unless we be united to Him as the branch to the Vine, by a loving faith in Him not only as the leader of men, but as the Redeemer of the world. Holiness rests

on appreciation of the way of redemption, and obedience to its appeal. The more we look into the longings and the heroisms of the world, the more we see that they forecast redemption. Antigone, Iphigenia, were precursory saviors. Holiness begins at the foot of the Cross, where, like Pilgrim, we lay down our burden of sin and sorrow, and take up our spiritual ideal and our immortal hope.

Does not holiness mean this — to follow the Christ in integrity, tenderness, radiance, joy? The good are not only the happy and loving; they are the star-crowned of the race. Holiness is a quiet and gentle, but vital, growth of the soul, — a moving toward the goodness and compassion of God. Holiness is also an honest use of the years and the opportunities of life. It is daily a deeper insight into spiritual truth; a growing command over will, temper, passion, foolish dreams; a progressive and victorious combat with Apollyon; a more heroic endurance of pain and trial; a more clinging trust in God; deeper communion with Him; sincerer personal love for the Christ; more sympathetic fellowship with men; more noble aspiration; more efficient service for God in the home, the church, the school, the state. Holiness is simply the normal and happy development of a soul whose will is one with the will of God.

6. The Wish for Remembrance After Death. One of the saddest things is the perish-

ableness of life. "Why dost thou build the hall," cries Fingal, "son of the winged days? Thou lookest from thy tower to-day; yet a few years, and the blast of the desert comes; it howls in thy empty court, and whistles round thy half-worn shield."

Ah, the empty court, the half-worn shield! There steals into the heart a longing which is different from the wish for power. There goes up a cry — I do not want to be forgotten when I die! I do not want the time to come when there shall be no more of me, when I shall have wholly passed away!

Oblivion presses on the race. Few can say confidently with Horace, *Non omnis moriar.* What do we know of the water-carriers of old Cairo? of the heralds of Alexandria? of the buglers of Tintagel? It is a solemn and curious question: What is the last thing that remains of man when he is dead? What is the last thing that will be remembered of me? When shall I, in the world's memory, cease to be?

Do we all die as a leaf, and are forgotten as a dream? Do we all pass as the way of ships? And shall the place that knew us remember us no more?

Such would be a sad fatality. Forgetfulness of us by the race is not meant to be. Our name may pass; but there is a high remembrance reserved for the upright of heart, — a remembrance conditioned

on the great law of Permanence itself. It is Remembrance through Control; the never-ceasing reverberation of an earnest and noble life.

> "Our echoes roll from soul to soul,
> And grow forever and forever."

The latest teaching of science is most impressive: it shows that wickedness perishes, but that there is a fine survival of the righteous act. Sin is suicidal, and in the race-development is lopped off. But moral grandeur outlives the generations of men, and spiritual integrity reaches forth to touch eternity.

"And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof, but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever."

7. The Wish for a Better Land. Our feet are pilgrim feet. They journey to the Beyond. In the midst of earth's wanderings, our eyes are elsewhere turned. "For now they seek a better country, that is, an heavenly." Cynewulf, the Old English poet of Northumbria, voices this desire when he so tenderly describes the Happy Land:

> "I have learnt that there is far hence
> In the east regions, the noblest land
> Known to men. . . . There may no rain nor snow,
> No breath of frost, nor blast of fire,
> No death of hail, nor fall of rime,
> No heat of sun, nor lasting cold,
> No weather warm, nor winter-shower
> Destroy a whit; but that plain remains
> Blest and quite whole: it is a lordly land,

Bourgeoning with bloom. . . .
Nor is there in that land a loathly foe,
Nor wrath nor weeping, nor a sign of woe,
Old age nor want, nor cruel death,
Nor dying, nor approach of ill:
No sin nor strife, nor sore revenge,
No stress of want, nor plenty's lack,
No sleep nor sorrow, no grievous ail."

The Happy-Land idyl has come down to us through the centuries, in the song of the poet, and in the word of the priest. Everywhere we hear the call of the heart from earth heavenward. Think of the hymns of the church of God. Why do we sing "O Paradise, O Paradise," "Jerusalem the Golden," "Oh, Mother dear, Jerusalem," and "For thee, O dear, dear country," except that we are weary waiting, and look out over the earth-changes and the earth-sorrows, for the time when sin shall be no more? The voices of Joseph of the Studium, Bernard, Keble, Newman, Cowper, Watts, Wesley, and Alford, unite in hymning the Better Land.

Heaven is the final answer to the Wish of Man. It is the fulfilment of all imagined rapture, the realization of all wistful and holy dreams. It is the abode of splendor, and the last great throne of power. Heaven is not altogether a distant place of unknown joy and peace. The beginning of heaven is in the heart, and now. But the full realization of heaven is hereafter, when in the glory, wonder, and mystery of the new-found world,

our eyes shall behold the King in His beauty, and we shall wander in the land that is very far off. There shall the veil be rent from life. There, over all earth's darkness, shall be shed the eternal meaning, the endless glory. We shall walk in white with the saints of God. We shall wear remembrance upon our garments, and upon our tongues shall be praise. Work shall be there, — the spiritual task into which we shall put energy and joy. And love shall be there, not the half-understanding of earth, but the deep tenderness of heaven; the companionship, the unceasing glad communion, with those whom our hearts have long held dear.

"In that world we weary to attain,
Love's furled banner floats at large unfurled;
There is no more doubt and no more pain,
In that world.

There are gems and gold and inlets pearled;
There the greenness fadeth not again;
There no clinging tendrils droop uncurled.

Here incessant tides stir up the main,
Stormy miry depths aloft are hurled: —
There is no more sea, or storm, or stain,
In that world."

Looking out over these phases of the wonder-working power of Desire, I am convinced that religion means the fulfilment, and not the estrangement or restraint, of Desire; that there are opening before the soul of man new worlds of conquest and new ways of social ascent; that there is such a

thing as the exaltation of longing, the enthronement of hope; and that the progress of man, sure, steady, and eternal, is by means of his soul's obedience to yearning, subject to the great, majestic Will of God.

God grant us, each and all, our heart's desire!